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REMARKS

Claims 1-14 were presented for examination. The Office Action rejects claims 1, 2, 6, 8, and 10-14, and objects to claims 3-5, 7 and 9 for being dependent upon a rejected base claim. This paper amends the claims 1, 2, 10, and 11. Claims 1, 10, and 11 are amended to more clearly describe translating from an AU-n to a TU-n. Support for the amendments can be found generally throughout the Applicant's specification, and specifically on page 17, line 11. The amendment to claim 2 is to maintain consistent antecedent basis with amended claim 1 from which claim 2 depends, and is neither narrowing nor made in response to any objection or rejection raised by the Office Action. Claims 1-14 remain pending in the application.

Rejection of claims 1-2, 6, 8, and 10-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Office Action rejects claims 1-2, 6, 8, and 10-14 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Norman (U.S. Patent No. 6,011,802) in view of Nakamura (U.S. Patent No. 6,385,213), and further in view of Chao (U.S. Patent No. 4,893,306). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection, to the extent that it is maintained against the amended claims, because the cited references, whether taken alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest translating an administrative unit (AU-n) to a tributary unit (TU-n) by putting the AU-n pointer of the AU-n into the TU-n, as now set forth in the Applicant's claimed invention.

Norman discloses standard multiplexing structures of SDH signals, but does not disclose or suggest translating an AU-n into a TU-n by putting the AU-n pointer of the AU-n into the TU-n.

Nakamura discloses a process for decomposing a frame to extract a lower level signal from a higher level signal. This breaking-down process uses an AU pointer of an AU signal to locate a TU signal within the AU signal, and then to extract the TU signal from the AU signal. Nakamura, however, does not disclose or suggest putting the AU pointer into the TU signal. Thus, Nakamura's extracted TU signal does not include the AU pointer. In contrast, as a

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result of the Applicant's claimed translating, the TU-n includes the AU pointer of the AU-n from which the TU-n is translated.

Chao discloses a hierarchical multiplexing plan that multiplexes tributaries having different bit rates into a common bit stream. But Chao, like Norman and Nakamura, also does not disclose or suggest translating an AU-n to a TU-n by putting the AU pointer of the AU-n into the TU-n, as now set forth in the Applicant's claimed invention. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection is overcome because none of the cited references teaches or suggests, alone or in combination, translating an administrative unit (AU-n) to a tributary unit (TU-n) by putting the AU-n pointer of the AU-n into the TU-n, as now set forth in the Applicant's claimed invention.

Independent claim 10 recites similar language as claim 1, and therefore is patentable for at least those reasons provided with respect to claim 1. Independent claim 11, in pertinent part, recites putting an AU-n pointer into the payload of an AU-n and translating the AU-n payload with the AU-n pointer into a TU-n payload. None of the cited references teaches or suggests putting the AU-n pointer of an AU-n into the payload of the AU-n and translating the AU-n payload into a TU-n payload. Also, none of the cited references teaches or suggests a plurality of AU pointers being hidden in a TU pointer area as set forth in independent claim 12.

Claims 6, 8, 10, 13 and 14 depend directly or indirectly from the patentable independent claims 1, 11 or 12, and incorporate all of the limitations of the appropriate independent claim, and therefore are also patentably distinguishable over the cited references for at least those reasons provided in connection with claims 1, 11, and 12. Therefore, the Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection against these claims also be withdrawn.

Rejection of claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Office Action rejects claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Norman in view of Nakamura in further view of Muller (U.S. Patent 5,465,252). The arguments presented above with respect to the cited references Norman and Nakamura are

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reiterated here with full force and effect. Further, Muller, like Norman and Nakamura, does not teach or suggest translating an administrative unit (AU-n) to a tributary unit (TU-n) by putting the AU-n pointer of the AU-n into the TU-n, as now set forth in the Applicant's claimed invention. Moreover, claim 4 depends directly from patentable independent claim 1, and incorporates all of the limitations of claim 1, and is therefore patentable for at least this reason.

Rejection of claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Office Action rejects claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Norman in view of Kivi-Mannila (U.S. Patent No. 5,539,750). The arguments presented above with respect to Norman are reiterated here with full force and effect. Moreover, neither Kivi-Mannila nor Norman teaches or suggests translating an administrative unit (AU-n) to a tributary unit (TU-n) by putting the AU-n pointer of the AU-n into the TU-n, as now set forth in the Applicant's claimed invention. Accordingly, any combination of these references fails to teach or suggest the Applicant's claimed invention. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

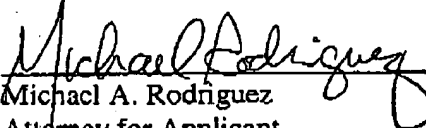
In view of the arguments made herein, Applicant submits that the application is in condition for allowance and requests early favorable action by the Examiner.

If the Examiner believes that a telephone conversation with the Applicant's representative would expedite allowance of this application, the Examiner is cordially invited to call the undersigned at (508) 303-2003.

Date: 12/10/03
Reg. No. 41,274

Tel. No.: (508) 303-2003
Fax No.: (508) 303-0005

Respectfully submitted,


Michael A. Rodriguez
Attorney for Applicant
Guerin & Rodriguez, LLP
5 Mount Royal Avenue
Marlborough, MA 01752